Mr. Ben Bradlee
Washington Post
1150 15 St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20071

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Dear Ben,

Because you once told me that you sometimes learn what you didn't know from letters, on several occasions I've intended to write you for a different purpose, to see if I could get you to think as you appear not to have thought. However, still new venous thromboses after successful surgery in January have weakened me more and I have little energy, so I haven't. If I were able to search my files now I'd not be writing you. I'd be preparing a brief in a lawsuit that involves evil precedents that can be hurtful to others. The government fabricated a conflict of interest with my lawyer so I'm pro se.

I'd intended writing you after your Outlook piece and I'm now triggered by yesterday's "Casey Warns Writer, Publishers..." and Lardner's on the CIA's phony "national security" claims to withhold what has nothing to do with national security.

First of all, with regard to the books, based on the many records I've gotten I am certain that the CIA, FBI or both will have copies before publication. They've done this fairly often. Not infrequently galleys.

All governments seek to withhold news that can be embarrassing but as perhaps you've seen, none as much as this administration. A little about the CIA's publishing efforts has come out but nothing that I know about of its anti-publishing efforts. If the Post had not limited its Watergate objectives, I gave your people adequate leads on this, involving E. Howard Hunt. I remember much and can probably locate the records. I am reasonably certain, for example, that Hunt and the CIA wrecked a deal I had on my first book more than two decades ago.

Over the years, as government sought to restrain information, it has been able to convert the Freedom of Information Act into an instrument for suppression. In the course of this it has made many representations to the courts about national security, confidential sources and intelligence methods. I've seen countless pages of such classified records after they were disclosed and I can't recall a single instance in which there was ever any legitimate question of national security, any disclosure of what has not already been disclosed, commonly by the agency making the phony claim itself, particularly the CIA and the FBI. Court records are full of this, but no reporters were ever in the courtrooms or read the records and thus it isn't known. I remember one case in which I addressed each and every one of many such withholdings by providing the disclosed records in which what the agency swore had to be kept secret had been disclosed, by it and by other agencies.

Not only do I believe that in the context of the current efforts to repress

and to suppress what can be embarrassing this record is news, I believe that at some point having it at hand may be advantageous if not necessary to people like you and the Post and the authors of unwanted books. You(plural) are going to have to cop out or fight back. Governments with the policies of this administration have little choice. If you could find time to detach yourself from all that keeps you so close and so busy you might be able to see this, or at least the possibility of it.

I've had a lot of this kind of litigation for a single person who has no real resources and there is a fair amount of this kind of phony national security claims in them, all sworn to and all sworn to falsely. There must be quite a bit of it in other cases and I do know of some in which I've provided affidavits.

If official perjury was not ~~considered~~ regarded as not newsworthy I'd probably not be in the position in which I now am so maybe that part won't interest you, but all these phony claims are sworn to and that is perjury. (In my litigation it is entirely undenied and the judge held that it was harmless - the whole case hinges on it - because it was merely "cumulative" - his word.)

If your lawyers consider it worthwhile it ought be possible to ridicule even the thickskinned Casey into silence.

A bit more on the Hunt business: if your people had followed the leads I developed and documented, a few of the official Watergaters might have been moistened by the Mexican laundry.

If you'd read as many of the records of these authoritarian-minded officials as I have you'd not in any way underestimate their intentions or determination. The awful thing is that they genuinely believe what is anti-American is true patriotism.

And with the publication of the stories I cite above and others like it, they have already succeeded to a large degree because they have frightened many writers and many publishers. Some publishrs have been pretty honest with me about this in the past. Moreover, the cost of defending spurious litigation is great and it discourages.

If you or your lawyers or others you know are ever interested in developing a major showing of fraudulent claims to national security and its many aspects and I can help, I'll do all I can. Meanwhile, good luck with these evil people!

Sincerely,

Harold

P.S. I also regard them as genuinely subversive.

You may also find the same CIA and FBI people who swore falsely swearing against those the agencies may decide to go after.

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